

A
LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. PERCIVAL STOCKDALE,

ON THE PUBLICATION OF

HIS *PRETENDED* CORRESPONDENCE

WITH THE

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

Ille bonis faveatque, et concilietur amicis,
Et regat iratos, et amet perire timentes. HOR.

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[Price ONE SHILLING.]

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TO THE REV.

MR. PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

SIR,

HAVING some time since read a printed letter from you to Mr. GRANVILLE SHARPE, the Treasurer of the *soi-disante* HUMANE Society in the Old Jewry, (* “ *The first practical Christian in the World,* ”) a letter you was induced to write by the insurrection of the *Africans* in St. Domingo : I was much pleased at seeing your advertiser announcing the publication of letters between your Diocesan and yourself, as “ *a correspondence interesting to every lover of literature, freedom, and religion.* ”

As this publication made its appearance immediately after the inquiry, made by the Lords at their bar, into the nature of the Slave Trade, and the treatment of the Negroes in the West Indies ; I concluded that your Bishop, having seen your letter to Mr. Sharpe, had probably reprimanded you for suffering *your humanity* to lead you into expressing such *barbarous* and *unchristian sentiments*, as that letter abounds with. I was in hopes that some remnant of virtue had induced you to enquire how far your assertions in that letter could be supported.

* Vide Letters to the Bishop, p. 5.

† Letter to G. Sharpe, p. 1.

I was sure that you must have been satisfied that Lord Macartney, Governor Barnes, the late Chief Justice of Jamaica, the Provost Marshal of that Island (who are no ways concerned or interested either in the Slave Trade or possessed of any property in the Colonies) and the other gentlemen of very great respectability and high reputation examined before their Lordships; had proved upon oath, beyond a possibility of contradiction, that there never hath been the least foundation for the stories invented or related by your friend Mr. Sharpe, the *reverend* Mr. Clarkson, and their worthy associates. That in particular no *wars* are ever excited by *Europeans* for the purpose of making slaves: that *kidnapping* of the natives, and the other enormities of which the Traders to Africa have been accused; (calumnies and falsehoods, which your *excess of humanity* has made you assiduous in propagating) never are practised, and indeed that such practices are impossible: that whenever wars have happened, all trade has been put a stop to; that they very seldom are entered into between the different nations inhabiting the neighbourhood of the sea coast, or those parts where the Europeans have settlements or factories: *and that the continuance of the trade is the only probable means of civilizing the inhabitants of Africa*; who are barbarous in proportion to their want of intercourse with the Europeans.

It appears equally evident from the testimony of these gentlemen, that the Negroes in the West Indies, instead of being treated with inhumanity and cruelty, are treated with the utmost kindness, and that their condition is superior to that of the generality of the poorer peasants in any part of Europe.

I could not doubt but you had made yourself acquainted with the only *legal* and *authentic* evidence; that is, the *only* evidence given *upon oath*, respecting a matter of such importance as you had so peremptorily decided upon; and as a man of virtue and probity (for such I *supposed* you *might be*, although led astray by a zeal without knowledge) I was inclined to hope, that when you had discovered your error, you would have solicited the pardon of those you had calumniated, of your *Bishop*, of the *Church*, and of *God*; for your intemperate and unchristian publication, which every pious and good man must have been offended at.

Even if the African merchants and West-India planters should have been as guilty as you have rashly asserted them to be; it surely would have been your duty as a christian divine, by mild and persuasive expressions, to have endeavoured to make them sensible of the injustice and impropriety of their conduct; and if your exhortations had not recalled *them* to their duty; to have taught *their slaves* to have submitted with resignation, to their fate; to have been obedient to their masters, "*not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward,*" teaching them also to forgive their oppressors, and look forward with confidence, to that reward in another world, which has been promised to those, "*who do their duty in that state of life, to which it hath pleased God to call them.*" This surely would have been your duty as a minister of the gospel.

But how was I surprised and disappointed to find (instead of a recantation of your *errors*, and expressions of *repentance*, and *sorrow*, for having borne *false witness* against your neighbours; the only atonement in your power to make

them) that this correspondence so pompously announced to the world, as interesting to the cause of literature, freedom, and religion, had little or no relation to *any of those subjects* ; but regarded merely a refusal of the Bishop of Durham to bestow on you a very valuable Living, to which, by your own shewing, you do not appear to have had the least *reasonable* pretensions whatsoever.

Have you really the vanity to think *such sermons*, and *such poetry*, as you sent the Bishop of Durham, worth one of the best rectories in that diocese ; in that diocese, too, the severe climate of which, you thought a sufficient excuse for not residing on either of the two livings, which you possessed there before* ?

Your publication informs us, that his Lordship refused your application for the living of *Hartburn*. The manner of his refusal the world will think to have been as civil as possible : he *politely* objected your former misconduct. (For such you know he considers the non-residence of a clergyman among his parishioners.) A man indeed who had but a slight degree of modesty would have considered his letter, not only as a refusal but as a reproof, and have been silenced. You persisted in your solicitation ; and if your hopes were *strengthened* by the first letter§, (which I do not believe those of any other gentleman would have been) his Lordship did not suffer you to be long under that delusion or suspense : within an hour after he gave you a more explicit refusal. You may, if you please, attribute that refusal to your possessing *those talents* and *that genius* which your *heavy brethren* may view with a jealous or malignant eye, rather than to those

* Vide Correspondence, p. 14, 15.—§ P. 25.

gentlemanlike *imprudencies*, those *irregularities*, and those *sins* which, but for the superiority of your talents, might be forgiven you.*

I do not assert that your correspondence with your Bishop has *no relation at all* to the interests of religion, I acknowledge that the part which respects *his refusal* of bestowing the living of *Hartburn* on you, may be very useful in *promoting* those interests. It is a proof that the Bishop of Durham merits those “verses of † eulogy on him extracted from the poem which you lately published at Durham;” and the praise you bestow on him, in your letter of the 17th of January last, for the “† generous attention he has shewn to the prosperity of religion;” and “that *such refusal* is a proof that church preferment is to be conferred by *his Lordship* on merit alone.”

But permit me, Reverend Sir, to ask you, if the world should join with me in opinion, that his Lordship’s refusal of bestowing the living of *Hartburn* on you, may be said to be interesting to the cause of religion, by its being a proof that he will not bestow preferment on those he judges unworthy; wherefore such refusal can be said to interest the cause of literature or freedom? Why should it cause you indiscriminately to censure the whole bench of bishops §? What right have you to be angry with the Bishop of Durham, because he did not “sooth your worldly vanity by saying something very polite to you on your naval sermons or your poetry?” || Why do you suppose his “*black slaves*,”** his “*cowardly Janizaries*, had †† POURED the vapour of the deadly night-shade into his ear?” [By the bye, pouring vapour, is a new disco-

* Correspondence, p. 28, 29.—† Preface, p. 13.—‡ Corresp. p. 7. Pref. p. 18, 19.—§ P. 23.—|| Ibidem.—** Corr. p. 24.—†† P. 20.

very, reserved for a man of your talents.] Would you have taken it for a compliment from his Lordship to have been told “he wondered how any clergyman could have been so little shocked at the ribaldry and blasphemy with which his ears were assailed, as to have composed even *such sermons?*” I have read of a man, who boasted of having made a vast number of verses, standing upon one leg: but we are not told that his verses were the better for it. It is probable the Bishop had not a better opinion of your sermons from the place and circumstances under which they were written; and as he says nothing in praise of your letter to Mr. Sharpe, or of your poetry, I think it probable he had no good opinion of either, and could not say any thing very polite about them, without being guilty of insincerity; or in your own more elegant phrase, “without incurring the falsehood of a Chesterfield.” As “* episcopal praise would have been but *vapid* to a heart to which genius had been allowed by a Garrick, a Johnson, and a Burke,”—why are you angry that you have it not bestowed *on you?* why does its being withheld induce you to say “Our good *fathers* of the church are in no danger of stumbling on *his* guilt; *they* will neither catch his *suaviter in modo* nor his *fortiter in re.* *” You tell us “you are not offended with the brevity of the Bishop’s letters; and you hope it will not displease your readers.” I dare promise you it will not, they can only be displeased that you have not *in brevity* imitated his Lordship.

You say his Lordship’s letters “have all the lacon-ian conciseness, but not a particle of its

force.” How far the fair literary fame, you are so solicitous of obtaining, will be promoted by your present publication, I know not; I should rather suspect if the critics form their judgment from the foregoing *lacon-ian* extracts, it will not be wonderfully augmented.

I am mistaken however, if the *guilt* which you do not think our good fathers of the church are in danger of incurring, may not fairly be imputed to the Bishop of Durham.

To your application for the living of Hartburn he gave you, first, a very gentle refusal; he told you, * “he felt some surprise, and could not suppress it, at your soliciting more preferment in a county, the severe climate of which, you urged as a plea for non-residence on *that*, which you then possessed in it:” surely this refusal was, “*suaviter in modo*.”

You were not satisfied; you persisted in your solicitation, and tell his Lordship, in your letter of the 1st of May, § “his goodness in bestowing on you the living of Hartburn, would be so *signal* and so *noble* that you would encounter that climate with pleasure: you would be *affluent*, but what would be far better, all your best feelings and sentiments would be unspeakably enriched.”

That your sermons, your letter † to Granville Sharpe, and your poem, wherein you had given his Lordship a more competent dose of *honest praise*, than by his answer to your letter he thought proper to swallow; should have failed to predispose his Lordship to give you this same living of Hartburn, I should not have been

* Corres. p. 14.—§ P. 15.—† P. 17.

able to account for. But when he resisted the arguments made use of in your letter of the 1st of May, above quoted, I can impute it to nothing else but his being as *regardless* and *inattentive* to *intellectual* merit, as Mr. Pitt himself, who appears to me as *blameable* in not obtaining you the Bishoprick of Durham of His Majesty, as the Bishop is for not bestowing on you the living of Hartburn; for you surely *merit* the one as much as you do the other.

But however blameable the Bishop has been in not embracing the opportunity you gave him of “*unspeakably enriching your best sentiments and feelings,*” he is as much so for incurring the guilt of a Chesterfield, by having “*caught*” his *suaviter* in *modo*, and his *fortiter* in *re*. I have already proved the first part of the charge. Within an hour after, he found his first letter not sufficient to make you desist from your petition he informed you “the living was disposed of.” This was *fortiter* in *re*. There was so much of the *suavitas* in the first letter, that the second became *necessary*; you felt the force of it. I think I have now fairly convicted the Bishop of a greater degree of *guilt* than you supposed him capable of.

Upon more mature reflection, I flatter myself, you will agree with me in opinion upon this point: you certainly must allow that his Lordship’s refusal was very soft indeed. You say, “it strengthened hope by not extinguishing it entirely:” your hopes certainly were extremely ardent, a man of less * “*distinguished talents,*” less subject to “*the concussion of actuated sensibility and of † genial inspiration,*” than yourself, would have been puzzled

* Pref. p. 16. † P. 18.

to have extracted the least particle of hope from the Bishop's first letter : had he not been guilty of the *suaviter in modo*, he would probably have expressed himself in the following manner, which is certainly the import of his letter.

SIR,

When you have already two Livings in Northumberland, (which would be worth near 300l. per annum to you, if you resided on either of them, and did your duty as a Clergyman of the Church of England ought to do :) it argues a want of common sense and decency in you, to apply to me for more preferment in a county, the severe climate of which you urge as a plea to excuse your non-residence, a point, you must know, I have always had at heart, as you tell me, in your letter of the 17th of January, you have learned my character from the Clergy of my former Diocese.

To a man of common discernment, his Lordship's first answer contains *all this*. Give me leave to add too, that as you tell his Lordship in your letter above-cited, his friends have asserted "that church preferment is to be conferred by his Lordship on merit alone," you must forgive me, if I think, when you knew such to be his Lordship's intentions, that you must possess a very considerable share of vanity, to suppose your merit entitled you to his Lordship's patronage. You have now given us a list of your literary performances, among them are a number of sermons, what merit they may have in the opinion of the world, your bookseller will inform you ; it will appear from the sale of them. I dare say the Bishop never heard of any but those you sent him. It does not appear he ever read them, or if he did,

that they *met* or *merited* his approbation ; but in which of your writings do you shew yourself “ * an honest and zealous advocate for the Church of England,” that you venerate “ our sacred establishment, or that you write with accuracy and spirit, in defence of the legal constitution of our Church, and thereby implicitly defend the large revenues of the See of Durham?” Thank God, against the Paine’s and Priestley’s of the age ; I think we may say

Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis
Tempus eget.

Is it by your elegy on a lady’s linnet, or the defence of the life and writings of Pope, or your present eulogy on Rousseau ; that you defend our Church establishment? Tell the world, sir, to which of your performances you annex the idea of such extraordinary merit, as notwithstanding his Lordship’s first letter, to make it necessary for him to write the second, which you complain, “ so *indelicately tore* all hope from your breast.”

It does not however appear that this “ unaccountable and indelicate manœuvre” was sufficient to eradicate such hope, which though it had been *strengthened* only for an hour, by not being *extinguished* for so short a period † was still alive ; unlike a man of “ a little soul incapable of manly resolution and firmness.” ‡ You still had *hopes* “ by an interview with the Bishop you might *prevail* with him to befriend you, and consequently to prevent an explanation, which would in *some* degree, be disagreeable to you

* Corres. p. 37.—† Ibid. p. 25.—‡ Ibid. 21.

both." * It is easy to guess what were the intentions with which you requested this interview. His Lordship had sufficient penetration to foresee and prevent your project—he might indeed have guarded against any mischief of that sort, by having some gentleman of reputation present when he received you ; but, with that delicacy, which the correspondence you have published, shews his Lordship has uniformly treated you, he made it a condition that a friend of your own should be present also. He pitched upon the very person you tell us, you yourself had wished to accompany you ; but who excused himself, for fear his Lordship should consider him as an intruder. The moment you had it in your power to inform your friend, that so far from an intrusion, his Lordship would not see you but in *his* company ; you shew that your *pretended* wishes for him to be present were not sincere.

From the correspondence you have published, it is clear you expected to obtain from his Lordship by your *menaces* what he would not grant to your solicitations, or your *alleged merit*. I say this appears from what you have published to the world. Perhaps his Lordship had still stronger reasons to suspect your intentions ; they might have been still clearer by the letter you delivered to his Lordship's servant on Monday the 14th. of May : as I have no acquaintance with his Lordship, I am totally ignorant of its contents, but from your account of it, '§ it was such as you expected would astonish and disgust him.' I am by no means anxious to know the contents of that letter ; if you thought they would have done you

* Corres. p. 39.—§ Ibid. p. 52.

honour, or credit, I doubt not, the letter would have made part of the correspondence you have *pretended* to publish, I say *pretended to publish*—because it appears from your own shewing the letter of the 8th of May, which you have published, was *not* the letter you wrote him.*—How far your *literary fame*, which you seem so anxious to acquire, will be promoted by your publishing *as a correspondence* with your Bishop, letters, which you did *not write*, suppressing those which *you did*, I leave to your friends, the Critical Reviewers, to decide: but I will venture to assert your reputation as an *honest man* and a *christian*, will not be much increased from it.

The Bishop of Durham may congratulate himself at having enjoyed a satisfaction, which Job wished for in vain.—His enemy “having written a book,” your Publication must shew to all those who shall read it, that he would have been unjustifiable had he honoured you with his patronage, for the reasons which I beg your permission to recapitulate.

After premising that his Lordship may probably have never heard of the greater part of your literary performances; or, if he has, may have a very different opinion of their *merit* from that which you entertain of them yourself; when I observe that in the publication now under my consideration, you say, † “you are told some of the poor inferior Clergy of the Principality of Wales are obliged to play upon catgut, to keep themselves and their families from starving,” (men, perhaps, not inferior in literary merit to

* Corres. p. 18.—† Vide Advertisement prefixed to the Correspondence.

Mr. Stockdale, and superior to him in a conscientious discharge of their clerical duty) I am inclined to suppose his Lordship may think two valuable livings in Northumberland, sufficient preferment for a man who pays small stipends to *two Curates* to do that duty, which he ought to perform *himself*, to *gentlemen* who, “being fitter to edify his parishioners than *he* is, from the *manner of thinking and writing* which *he* has *adopted*,”* have a better right to the whole emoluments of the Cures they serve.

What reply, Sir, can you make if you are asked, What *right* have you to receive the tythes of those parishes in Northumberland, which are appropriated to you as pastor of those churches, for the pains you ought to take in watching over your flocks, and not to enable you “to devote your life and your interest to the cultivation of your mind; to intellectual reputation?” §

These, Sir, I say are reasons which probably have weighed with the Bishop to refuse you the Living of Hartburn; and when you compare your revenue with that of the Welch Clergymen, and your own Curates, (notwithstanding your great literary merit) you will find them worth attention. But I proceed to others still more important.

If the Bishop of Durham considers non-residence in a Clergyman as a criminal neglect of duty, and what renders *you* unworthy his patronage, that alone would be a sufficient reason for his refusing you the Rectory you solicited. The *slothful and wicked servant*, who was unfaithful in the employment of the *one talent* commit-

* Pref. p. 21.—§ Ibid.

ted to his charge, did not meet with the reward of the good ones.

But if you really supposed your Diocesan to have * "that regard and generous attention to the prosperity of religion, which are manifested in his Episcopal pamphlets which you have read," and the assertion made by his friends, "that Church preferment is to be conferred by *him* on *merit* alone," you would have concluded the merit alluded to was *ecclesiastical merit*; so that whatever may be your poetical and literary talents, they certainly would give you no title to his Lordship's patronage, unless those talents were directed to the improvement and instruction of your parishioners, and your countrymen, in Christian knowledge, and the duties of the holy religion, of which you are a Minister. But have your writings, or your poetry, in any degree such tendency? What sort of spirit must you be of? who declare that "you should approve the conduct of the Negroes if they exterminated their *masters*, (whom you call their *tyrants*) with fire and sword, whose conduct you would crown with eulogium, should they deliberately inflict the most exquisite tortures on them."†

How must a Christian Prelate shudder at receiving a pamphlet from a man, calling himself a Minister of the Gospel of Peace, in which he informs him, "that he has for nineteen years together persevered in the diabolical wishes expressed in the following execrable verses?"

" Oh ! may the Negroes with an iron rod

" *Avenge* the cause of Nature, and of God ;

* Corres. p. 7.—† Letter, to Granville Sharp, p. 19 —§ *Ibid.* p. 26,

- " May they in happy *combination* rise,
- " Torture their doom, or liberty their prize,
- " Rush with resistless fury on their foes,
- " By one great effort expiate Afric's woes.
- " Eager each mark of slavery to efface,
- " Of their pale fiends *exterminate* the race."

In plain prose, may the Negroes murder every white man, woman, and child in the West-Indies.

Had there been no other reason but the last, the Bishop of Durham would not only have been justified in refusing you the Living of Hartburn, but he would have been inexcusable, if he had bestowed preferment on a man, who preaches *revenge, murders, and tortures* of innocent infants, as well as of those whom he pretends to judge, and to pronounce guilty; instead of inculcating the forgiveness of injuries, that love, peace, and good-will towards men, recommended in the Gospel; and who encourages, and, as much as in him lies, incites, slaves to rebel against their masters, in opposition to the doctrines of Christ and his Apostles, by which they are exhorted to obedience and submission, "*not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*"

If you had not exposed the *profligacy* of your sentiments, the *barbarity* and *cruelty* of your disposition, by the letter to Mr. Sharpe, (from which I have made the foregoing extracts) the publication which occasions the present address to you would, in the opinion of every man of common sense, justify the Bishop's resisting your application. You therein tell the world, "your life has been unfortunately marked with *impru-*

dence*, with errors, with faults†.” Are these some of the best claims you have to the patronage of the Bishop of Durham? I must suppose you mean to describe *yourself* by the “Man of Genius,” *unfortunate, improvident, and guilty of irregularities*—“whose sins might be forgiven, but his talents are unpardonable.”

After such an account of yourself, there seems to be but one plea on which you could reasonably found your hopes of the Bishop's favour, and you have availed yourself of it, in your letter of the 27th of April. The affluence you would obtain from possessing that Living, made you hope, “that by your conduct you would redress imprudencies (*your own, I suppose*), refute the accusations, and defeat the industry of envy and malignity§.” Though I allow these reasons to be good ones, I really conceive, if you had done all these things before your application to the Bishop, you would have stood a better chance of succeeding with him. As you amuse yourself sometimes in writing for the Stage, permit me to ask, if, when you urged that plea, you had not an eye to the pious Mrs. Cole's observation? “that if she had but for only one season a few of the *charming young creatures*, (which the wicked Roman Catholics confine in their nunneries) her fortune would be made, and she would have nothing to do but to *repent*, and think of *hereafter*.”

Men of such *very great abilities* as you think you are possessed of, are apt to soar above, and despise the slighter circumstances of consistency and propriety: after acknowledging in your preface

* Pref. p. 17, 24.—† Corres. p. 28, 29.—§ Ibid. p. 13.

* that you would have been a fool to have written *such letters* to your Diocesan as you have done. "If from the gloom of an episcopal palace you had *felt* a ray of hope which would have made its *darkness visible* to you," you † publish a letter, wherein "you still intreat his Lordship to cast your lot in a fair ground," and "wish to *support* what you call your *drooping interest* with him; you tell us, "† that for *a great part* of your life, you have been very diligent in the service of our Church—and that you have adored the author of our religion, a religion you have always revered." In the next page we have the strongest reason to suspect what that religion is. Can the man be regarded as a *Christian*, who considers Rousseau, not only "an illustrious, but a *DIVINE* character? Who, instead of studying the Holy Scriptures, *which are sufficient to make us wise unto Salvation*, learns *his Christianity* "in the *workshop of Emilius*, on the rocks of *Meillerie*, or at the tomb of *Eloisa*, who, instead of *praying* to God, to *perfect him in his faith and fear*, and in the love of his most holy name; *invokes* this enemy of Christianity (for such Rousseau undoubtedly was) "whose *posthumous walks*, (he declares) are in the mansions of the just;" who, perhaps, was at the time listening to the strains of Musæus and of Virgil, or offering the tear of pity to the melancholy ghost of Dido, for assistance." § This is the divine personage to whom he now offers his devotion, whom he invokes "to throw his luminous mantle," that mantle "which glitters through the *Groves of Elysium*—glitters with the *purple* light of love. This is the saint, whom he considers as the *Elijah* of the Christian World;

* Pref. p. 18.—† Ibid. p. 33, 46.—‡ P. 25.—§ P. 28.

and from whom he demands his *Mantle*—his acute and vigorous understanding—his tears of ecstasy and of rapture ;” these are “ the glorious endowments” he demands “ *at whatever Hazard!*” *

If, Sir, you calmly reflect on what you have written, and permit us to suppose your Diocesan knew that your sentiments were such as you have now given to the Public ; you must confess that he would have forfeited all title to the character you have given him, of having a generous attention to the interests of religion ; if he had honoured you with his patronage, who, to complete the proof of your having no just claim to preferment in the *Christian Church*, in your rhapsodical apostrophe to your *divine prophet* tell us, you consider the taking on you the priesthood to be one of your *great misfortunes*. †

I have endeavoured, and I hope, not without success, to justify the Bishop of Durham’s refusal of giving you the living of Hartburn, because you do not appear to possess the principles of humanity, or to be guided by those of Christianity. I shall not, I believe, have any difficulty to shew, from your former, as well as from the present publication, that you are equally deficient in the principles of morality and justice.

You venture to say, in your preface to the letter to Mr. Granville Sharpe, that “ about 100,000 human beings are annually taken *by force* from the Coast of Africa, 45,000 of whom are murdered before any additional stock is received by the Colonies. That all the working Slaves in the West-Indies are extinct in every fourth or fifth year from the time of their transportation.”

* Pref. p. 29.—† Ib. p. 27.

In your last publication you repeat your calumnious assertions, and say, "that people continue to enslave, and torment, and murder an infinite number of the human species; after that horrid treatment of them has been proved by the most numerous and respectable testimonies: yet you acknowledge the cause at the time you wrote, was disputed in the House of Lords, in the Upper House of Legislation of England, in our supreme Court, in the Court of our last resort, of equity and humanity."

It is equally inconsistent with the precepts of Christianity and Justice, that a private, and I will say, an *ignorant* and *conceited* individual should dare to pronounce sentence on a matter which is in litigation before so uncorrupt and august a tribunal as the House of Lords.—Yet, Sir, you have the audacity to persevere in repeating the infamous falsities, and horrid calumnies published by the Members of the Society in the Old Jewry, and their scandalous accomplices. You assert, "*those tales are proved beyond a possibility of doubt* in several pamphlets, and particularly in an Abstract of the Evidences on the Slave Trade, delivered before a select Committee of the House of Commons." It cannot be from ignorance that you refer your readers to *pamphlets*, as proving the facts they assert. You must know, sir, that the declarations made by the people *who were brought* before the Committee of the House of Commons, and the Committee of the Lords of the Privy Council, are not evidence; and that if they were, the accounts contained in the Abstract you refer your readers to, are contradicted by ten times the number of gentlemen of the most unblemished reputations, and whose respectability is so su-

perior to those, who, for the most part, have been *picked up* and *tutored* for the purpose of calumniating the Planter and the Merchant, that it would be an injury to them, to be named together. *

You cannot, Sir, be ignorant of these facts,

* It is remarkable, that although Mr. Clarkson, who, in the disguise of an attorney and sailor, hunted the taverns and brothels of the sea-port towns of this kingdom, to find such persons as could be prevailed on to tell stories of cruelty to the prejudice of the Planters and Merchants, and who produced people, with their tales ready drawn up *by himself*, before the Committees of the Privy Council and the House of Commons; he could find none hardy enough to authenticate the infamous stories of the iron coffin with holes in it, the slitting the ears of Negroes by way of marking them, the using penknives or cutlasses as instruments of punishment, and such other abominable calumnies as he declared he had heard from men of undoubted veracity.

The whip is the only instrument of correction which any of them dare mention.—That the Negroes who misbehave are corrected with the whip, is acknowledged; but it is proved *upon oath*, at the Bar of the House of Lords, that such correction is mild and merciful. It is applied to that part where it is least likely to have any mischievous consequences; to the posteriors only. This Mr. Stockdale must have known. It appears from General Tottenham's account, quoted by him—who tells us, *two pretty young females*, who waited at table, were ordered to be corrected by their mistress; his *curiosity* led him to see *the performance*; he arose from the table, and went for that purpose to the parade, where they were punished: he saw them pull up their clothes, and receive each of them a dozen lashes on the bare breech. He adds, that all the Negroes he saw in the country were marked by the whip in the same manner. How could the General know this circumstance? The men universally wear breeches or trowsers, and the women petticoats. Is it to be believed the General's *curiosity* was *universal*? This shews what credit ought to be given to those kind of *tales*, which the Rev. Mr. Stockdale *calls evidence*, and accounts for the advocates of the Abolition never having been able to produce any Negroes, whose backs shew the marks of the cruel whippings they are said to have received; the reason is, the whip is never applied to their backs, but to their back-sides.

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because the different accounts are printed in the same volumes ; and it is *wicked* and *immoral* in the extreme in you, to refer your readers to partial and garbled extracts of accounts, to injure the reputation and fortune of innocent men ; when you must know that such accounts and all the tales propagated by M. M. Wilberforce, Fox, Clarkson, Sharpe, Smith, Thornton, and others their accomplices, have been contradicted at the Bar of the House of Lords, by *gentlemen* of the very first respectability, who have proved *on Oath*, that the Negroes carried to and residing in the West-Indies, are treated with such tenderness and humanity, that their situation is better than that of the labouring poor in any part of Europe. That so far is the Slave Trade from being cruel or injurious to the welfare of the inhabitants of Africa, it is proved to a demonstration, that there is no such thing as the Negroes being kidnapped, or carried off by force, but that the lives of thousands of the Negroes, are preserved by this traffic ; who would otherwise perish for want, be cruelly massacred, or sacrificed to the manes of their great men, or to their idols. It appears from the same respectable testimony, so far are *all the Negroes* that are transported to the West-Indies from perishing in four years, as you have shamefully advanced, that the mortality among them is not greater nor so great as those of the white inhabitants in our colonies, and I can venture to assert, by no means equal to that of the manufacturing poor in Manchester or Birmingham.*

* It appears from the evidence given by Lewis Cuthbert, Esq. at the Bar of the House of Lords, that the decrease of the

I have the more assiduously endeavoured to bring into notice, in this Publication, your false and groundless assertions respecting the Slave Trade, that I may awaken the attention of my readers to the manner in which that subject has been discussed. By far the greater part of those, whose feelings have been put to the rack, and whose active exertions have been procured in support of public meetings and petitions respecting the inhumanity of that trade, have given implicit faith to the representations of men, like yourself, *apparently* the disinterested advocates of justice and extensive benevolence. A Divine of the Church of England pleading in such a cause, *seems* to be in his proper function, and to be discharging the most decorous part of his office. We cannot readily admit that *his* pity is the offspring of malevolence, *his* charity the nursling of slander. We naturally revolt at the idea that *he* should *wish* those horrid cruelties he relates to be true, and that he should shut his ears against conviction of their non-existence, rather than that the party he has accused should be acquitted, or the secret motives of his accusation be defeated. The task of your opponents, Sir, would have therefore been more difficult, had you con-

the Negroes is not more than about 2 1-tenth *per cent.* which is easily to be conceived must happen, when, from the same evidence, it appears that the females imported are in proportion to the males as about 5 1-quarter to 7, or 21 to 28. It appears by the Report of the Privy Council, (Part III. detached Papers, No. 1,) by the return of the troops sent to the West-Indies, that in 1764 the mortality among them was 12 15-sixteenths *per cent.*; in 1765 were 10 *per cent.*; in 1772, 10 7-eighths; in 1773, 12 1-half. In Grenada in 1773, 22 *per cent.*; in the next year, 21 3-eighths. In St. Vincent's and Antigua in 1785 only 4 *per cent.*; in 1786, 19 7-eighths.

finer your lucubrations to the miseries of the African Negroes. You have done the cause of truth a justice which you did not intend, by giving to the public your correspondence with the Bishop of Durham. You have saved the West-India Planters and Merchants, *in one instance at least*, the trouble of shewing, *of what spirit* are their most violent accusers, and how possible it is that a florid writer may dilate his vast ideas of justice and benevolence beyond his own little sphere of action; *disinterestedly* grasping after sinecure preferment, *humly* claiming merit from self-imputed talents, and *morally* and *justly* seeking to substitute literary fame for the performance of sacred duty.

I shall now, Reverend Sir, take my leave of you, first assuring you I have no *ray of hope* from the Episcopal Palace of Durham, nor any *drooping*, or other interest, to support with his Lordship, for I have not the honour of his acquaintance; nor am I, or ever shall I be your *companion* in misfortune, *by taking the priesthood*. I wish not to *avenge* my friends, whom you have calumniated, "*with an iron rod*;" I wish you to repent having borne *false witness against the Planters and Merchants*; I wish you to remember that you once solemnly engaged, as a Minister of the Gospel, to be zealously employed in good works, to be an imitator of the meek, the abstemious, the benevolent Messiah †; which will certainly be a more efficacious means of your *growing* a Christian, and a *better man*, than by "*marking with a moral* the irregular ardour of the heroes, or he-

† Preface to Correspondence, p. 27.

romes of Rousseau, or by marking the excruciating agonies, and the transitory bliss of a charming but delusive passion." †

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

† Ibid, p. 28.



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